

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1 1. A computer implemented method comprising:  
2 invoking a collaborative discussion, the collaborative  
3 discussion including a plurality of users;  
4 receiving a message from one of the plurality of  
5 users, the message including a rule;  
6 identifying a subset of the plurality of users that  
7 correspond to the rule; and  
8 forwarding the message to the identified users.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the message includes a  
2 comment, and wherein recipient clients are adapted to  
3 display the comment in the same display window as the  
4 collaborative discussion, the recipient clients  
5 corresponding to the identified users.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the comment is displayed  
2 using display attributes corresponding to a rule pen,  
3 the rule pen corresponding to the rule.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the rule includes a  
2 plurality of rule sentences, the identifying further  
3 comprising:  
4 selecting a participant entry, the participant entry  
5 corresponding to one of the plurality of users; and  
6 matching each of the plurality of rule sentences with  
7 one or more user attributes that correspond to the  
8 selected participant entry.

- 1 5. The method of claim 4 wherein at least one of user  
2 attributes is selected from the group consisting of a  
3 job description and an expertise.
- 1 6. The method of claim 4 wherein at least one of the rule  
2 sentences includes a rule sentence value, and wherein  
3 the rule sentence value is selected from the group  
4 consisting of a term, a constant, a connective and a  
5 function.
- 1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein a recipient client is  
2 adapted to modify the rule, the modifying including  
3 changing the number of rule sentences that correspond  
4 to the rule, the recipient client corresponding to one  
5 of the identified users.
- 1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the received message is  
2 sent from a sending client, the sending client adapted  
3 to select a rule pen from a rule pen stand, wherein  
4 the rule pen includes the rule.
- 1 9. An information handling system comprising:  
2 one or more processors;  
3 a memory accessible by the processors;  
4 one or more nonvolatile storage devices accessible by  
5 the processors; and  
6 a collaborative discussion tool that identifies a  
7 subset of a plurality of users that correspond to a  
8 rule, the collaborative discussion tool comprising  
9 software code effective to:

10                   invoke a collaborative discussion, the  
11                   collaborative discussion including the  
12                   plurality of users;  
  
13                   receive a message from one of the plurality  
14                   of users over a computer network, the  
15                   message including the rule;  
  
16                   identify a subset of the plurality of users  
17                   that correspond to the rule using user  
18                   attributes that are located in one of the  
19                   nonvolatile storage devices; and  
  
20                   forward the message to the identified users  
21                   over the computer network.

1    10.   The information handling system of claim 9 wherein the  
2           message includes a comment, and wherein recipient  
3           clients are adapted to display the comment in the same  
4           display window as the collaborative discussion, the  
5           recipient clients corresponding to the identified  
6           users.

1    11.   The information handling system of claim 9 wherein the  
2           rule includes a plurality of rule sentences, wherein  
3           the software code is further effective to:  
4           select a participant entry located in one of the  
5           nonvolatile storage devices, the participant entry  
6           corresponding to one of the plurality of users; and  
  
7           match each of the plurality of rule sentences with one  
8           or more user attributes that correspond to the  
9           selected participant entry.

1 12. The information handling system of claim 11 wherein at  
2 least one of the rule sentences includes a rule  
3 sentence value, and wherein the rule sentence value is  
4 selected from the group consisting of a term, a  
5 constant, a connective and a function.

1 13. The information handling system of claim 9 wherein a  
2 recipient client is adapted to modify the rule, the  
3 modifying including adding or removing one or more  
4 rule sentences to or from the rule, the recipient  
5 client corresponding to one of the identified users.

1 14. The information handling system of claim 9 wherein the  
2 received message is sent from a sending client over  
3 the computer network, the sending client adapted to  
4 select a rule pen from a rule pen stand, wherein the  
5 rule pen includes the rule.

1 15. A program product comprising:  
2 computer operable medium having computer program code,  
3 the computer program code being effective to:  
4           invoke a collaborative discussion, the  
5           collaborative discussion including a  
6           plurality of users;  
7           receive a message from one of the plurality  
8           of users, the message including a rule;  
9           identify a subset of the plurality of users  
10          that correspond to the rule; and  
11          forward the message to the identified users.

- 1 16. The program product of claim 15 wherein the message  
2 includes a comment, and wherein recipient clients are  
3 adapted to display the comment in the same display  
4 window as the collaborative discussion, the recipient  
5 clients corresponding to the identified users.
- 1 17. The program product of claim 15 wherein the rule  
2 includes a plurality of rule sentences, wherein the  
3 computer program code is further effective to:  
4 select a participant entry, the participant entry  
5 corresponding to one of the plurality of users; and  
6 match each of the plurality of rule sentences with one  
7 or more user attributes that correspond to the  
8 selected participant entry.
- 1 18. The program product of claim 17 wherein at least one  
2 of the rule sentences includes a rule sentence value,  
3 and wherein the rule sentence value is selected from  
4 the group consisting of a term, a constant, a  
5 connective and a function.
- 1 19. The program product of claim 15 wherein a recipient  
2 client is adapted to modify the rule, the modifying  
3 including changing the number of rule sentences that  
4 correspond to the rule, the recipient client  
5 corresponding to one of the identified users.
- 1 20. The program product of claim 15 wherein the received  
2 message is sent from a sending client, the sending  
3 client adapted to select a rule pen from a rule pen  
4 stand, wherein the rule pen includes the rule.

1 21. A computer implemented method comprising:  
2 invoking a collaborative discussion, the collaborative  
3 discussion including a plurality of users;  
4 receiving a message from one of the plurality of  
5 users, the message including a rule, wherein the rule  
6 includes a plurality of rule sentences;  
7 selecting a participant entry, the participant entry  
8 corresponding to one of the plurality of users;  
9 matching each of the plurality of rule sentences with  
10 one or more user attributes that correspond to the  
11 selected participant entry, the matching resulting in  
12 an identified user; and  
13 forwarding the message to the identified user, wherein  
14 the message includes a comment, and wherein a  
15 recipient client is adapted to display the comment in  
16 the same display window as the collaborative  
17 discussion, the recipient client corresponding to the  
18 identified user.

1 22. A computer implemented method comprising:  
2 invoking a collaborative discussion, the collaborative  
3 discussion including a plurality of users;  
4 receiving a message from one of the plurality of  
5 users, the message including a plurality of rule  
6 sentences, wherein at least one of the rule sentences  
7 includes a rule sentence value, and wherein the rule  
8 sentence value is selected from the group consisting  
9 of a term, a constant, a connective and a function;

10       selecting a participant entry, the participant entry  
11       corresponding to one of the plurality of users;  
12       matching each of the plurality of rule sentences with  
13       one or more user attributes that correspond to the  
14       selected participant entry, the matching resulting in  
15       an identified user; and  
16       forwarding the message to the identified user.

1   23.   An information handling system comprising:  
2       one or more processors;  
3       a memory accessible by the processors;  
4       one or more nonvolatile storage devices accessible by  
5       the processors; and  
6       a collaborative discussion tool that identifies a  
7       subset of a plurality of users that correspond to a  
8       rule, the collaborative discussion tool comprising  
9       software code effective to:  
10                invoke a collaborative discussion, the  
11                collaborative discussion including a  
12                plurality of users;  
13                receive a message from one of the plurality  
14                of users over a computer network, the  
15                message including a rule, wherein the rule  
16                includes a plurality of rule sentences;  
17                select a participant entry from one of the  
18                nonvolatile storage devices, the participant  
19                entry corresponding to one of the plurality  
20                of users;

21 match each of the plurality of rule  
22 sentences with one or more user attributes  
23 that correspond to the selected participant  
24 entry, the matching resulting in an  
25 identified user; and

26 forward the message to the identified user  
27 over the computer network, wherein the  
28 message includes a comment, and wherein a  
29 recipient client is adapted to display the  
30 comment in the same display window as the  
31 collaborative discussion, the recipient  
32 client corresponding to the identified user.

1 24. A program product comprising:  
2 computer operable medium having computer program code,  
3 the computer program code being effective to:  
4 invoke a collaborative discussion, the  
5 collaborative discussion including a  
6 plurality of users;  
7 receive a message from one of the plurality  
8 of users, the message including a rule,  
9 wherein the rule includes a plurality of  
10 rule sentences, the matching resulting in an  
11 identified user; and  
12 forward the message to the identified user,  
13 wherein the message includes a comment, and  
14 wherein a recipient client is adapted to  
15 display the comment in the same display  
16 window as the collaborative discussion, the



17                   recipient client corresponding to the  
18                   identified user.

1   25.   A program product comprising:  
2       computer operable medium having computer program code,  
3       the computer program code being effective to:  
  
4               invoke a collaborative discussion, the  
5               collaborative discussion including a  
6               plurality of users;  
  
7               receive a message from one of the plurality  
8               of users, the message including a plurality  
9               of rule sentences, wherein at least one of  
10              the rule sentences includes a rule sentence  
11              value, and wherein the rule sentence value  
12              is selected from the group consisting of a  
13              term, a constant, a connective and a  
14              function;  
  
15              select a participant entry, the participant  
16              entry corresponding to one of the plurality  
17              of users;  
  
18              match each of the plurality of rule  
19              sentences with one or more user attributes  
20              that correspond to the selected participant  
21              entry, the matching resulting in an  
22              identified user; and  
  
23              forward the message to the identified user.